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THE TALKING AND TACITURN AGES.

AMONG all the enjoyments of life, there was none which our great lexicographer esteemed superior to a "good talk." It was to him as the supper of the Gods. He would walk a long way for it; and if he attained his end, he would express his highest feelings of satisfaction by saying, "Sir, we had a good talk." What share he took in it himself on such occasions, it might have been interesting to inquire. That it was a large one, we may rest assured; but few probably complained of the circumstance—so capital a talker was our "British Socrates." Yet to a good talk on equal terms, it will be allowed there should be some reciprocity. To "harangue" in company is not to talk fairly. It is a practice, indeed, common enough in the world; but if the just rules which ought to prevail in the conversational commonwealth be considered, it must be allowed to be a violation of them. The formality of the speech is utterly destructive to the freedom of the republic. Reciprocity is its very life and soul; but the speech-maker lays it up at once in a state of suspended animation. Next to the speech-maker, we may rank as the greatest infringer of these laws the determined "arguifer," or disputatious person, who loves an argument so much that you can advance no proposition that he is not ready immediately to controvert. In the presence of such a person, conversation shares the fate of true love, and never can "run smooth." There is an appearance of equitableness about this character, that may render him less manifestly encroaching than the former; but his egotism is only a little better concealed, and he invariably achieves the same disagreeable result, namely, to silence every body else, and keep the field entirely to himself. Of such a person we shall say with Jacques, "I have been all day to avoid him. He is too 'disputable' for my company. I think of as many matters as he: but I give heaven thanks, and make no boast."

There are two words in the English language which really comprise all the rules, laws, and regulations necessary for the good government of conversation, and these are "brevity," "reciprocity." If each individual would remember when he takes part in conversation that there are others to do so as well as himself, he would necessarily be brief in his own performances. And this brevity has many advantages. Our time is short; our meetings together for conversation are commonly, like angels' visits, "few and far between," and in general short; tediousness is the sure destroyer, as brevity is "the soul," of wit, and therefore he that would enliven his hearers, and dispose them to hear him again, should be above all things "short." It is acting upon the second golden line, also, and shows a proper consideration for the rights of others. It is doing as a man would be done by. In addition to which, we may observe, that each should listen, if he desire to be listened to—should hear, if he desire to be heard in return.

Thus these two words "brevity" and "reciprocity" form a concise but plain and simple code upon the subject. Much might be said, indeed, in the way of commentary; but commentary sometimes tends rather to obscure than to elucidate, and in this case is manifestly uncalled for.

It must be remembered, however, that these laws can only conduce to the *improvement* and *regulation* of conversational intercourse, but are wholly inadequate to *originate* or *insure* that "good talking" of which the report has come down to us. This is an object not to be accomplished by rule. The proverb of the wise man says that "out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh;" and we may safely affirm that where there is plenty of matter weighing upon the mind, and where it is of a kind that interests the feelings, there will be at least no lack of utterance. Under an opposite state of things, a contrary result may be expected, and cannot, by any rule of art that we have ever heard of, be contravened. But we must proclaim a truce with this train of observation. We feel that we have been twaddling after the manner of some of our elder essayists, oblivious of the age in which we actually exist. Who has time to think *now* of good talking, or of talking at all?

The age of Johnsonism is departed; and in these days, instead of running after a "good talk," there is nothing which the people would run more resolutely from. This is the age of hurry and bustle, and of doing, not talking. It is the age of machinery and iron. We do every thing by mechanical contrivance: we print by it, travel by it, count by it, and very soon, we expect, we shall talk by it. All our great dis-

coveries and inventions are unfavourable to speech. What need to speak, indeed, when almost every thing we may wish to say or hear of is printed? No occasion to ask our neighbour questions, or to moot points of any kind with us: the press answers and discusses them all most satisfactorily. Printing is driving conversation out of the world. It is rendering it not only superfluous, but impracticable; for how is it possible to find time to read all that is given us to read in these days, and to go on talking after the old fashion? The thing is manifestly impossible; and our own conclusion is, that we are hurrying on rapidly to the age of pure taciturnity. When the sun of this solemn age shall have reached its meridian, talking will have passed into the mouths of old women and sucklings, or of merely professional people. We say professional people, because, though conversation in general will have become monosyllabic, or be carried on perhaps by signals, without the use of speech at all, we yet think it highly probable that there will be persons who will occupy themselves with it as a profession. This will be only a carrying out of the grand principle of the division of labour; and their occupation, being followed professionally, will be executed in the very best style, and on the most scientific principles. Professional talkers will then be engaged for large parties just as singers are now, and will amuse the company with studiously prepared anecdotes, beautifully executed disquisitions, flashes of merriment, repartees, rejoinders, grave remarks, useful hints, and whatever else can conduce to entertain or instruct—whilst hosts and guests will on their part sit at ease in all the luxury of silence.

As to the rules of "good talking" which we began by laying down, we are sensible that in a short time they must become quite obsolete. Conversation is even now as the "last rose of summer," and going out very fast indeed. If what we have said can be of any use to cheer or improve its declining years, we shall be amply rewarded; but if we are already too late, then let it be kept, and in some twenty years more it may be looked upon as a decided curiosity. "See here what I have found," may somebody "use the machine to intimate, for as to speaking so many words together, nobody will do it. "See what I have found in an early number of the Irish Penny Journal—'Rules for good talking!'—well, now, what could *that* have been? Dear me, what strange habits they must have had in those days!" X. D.

THE JACOBITE RELICS OF IRELAND.—No. I.

THE Jacobite relics of England, and to a still greater extent those of Scotland, have been given to the world, and are well deserving of such preservation; for they reflect no small light on the character and temperament of the English and Scottish people during the last century. But until the appearance of Mr Hardiman's Irish Minstrelsy it was hardly known that in their political enthusiasm for the fate of a decaying family the Irish people participated with so large a portion of those of the sister islands, and that it gave birth to an equal number of poetical effusions in our own country—but with this difference, that their sentiments are usually veiled under an allegorical form, and always in the Irish language. To Mr Hardiman we are indebted for the preservation of the originals of many of those productions, and also for translations of them. These translations are however too free to enable the English reader to form any very accurate idea of the Irish originals, and we are therefore tempted to present a series of these relics to our readers, with translations of a more literal and faithful description; not limiting ourselves to those which have already appeared in Mr Hardiman's work—as in the specimen which we have selected to commence with, which is still popularly sung in Ireland to the old melody called "Kathaleen Ny-Houlahan."

We may observe, that the name of the author of this song, if ever known, is no longer remembered; but there seems to be no doubt that the song itself is of Munster origin.

KATHALEEN NY-HOULAHAN.

Long they pine in weary woe, the nobles of our land,
Long they wander to and fro, proscribed, alas! and banned;
Feastless, houseless, altarless, they bear the exile's brand,

But their hope is in the coming-to of Kathaleen Ny-Houlahan!

Think her not a ghastly hag, too hideous to be seen,
Call her not unseemly names, our matchless Kathaleen;
Young she is, and fair she is, and would be crowned a queen,
Were the king's son at home here with Kathaleen Ny-Houlahan!

Sweet and mild would look her face, O none so sweet and mild,
 Could she crush the foes by whom her beauty is reviled;
 Woollen plaids would grace herself and robes of silk her child,
 If the king's son were living here with Kathaleen Ny-Houlahan!
 Sore disgrace it is to see the Arbitress of thrones,
 Vassal to a *Saxoneen* of cold and sapless bones!
 Bitter anguish wrings our souls—with heavy sighs and groans
 We wait the Young Deliverer of Kathaleen Ny-Houlahan!
 Let us pray to Him who holds Life's issues in His hands—
 Him who formed the mighty globe, with all its thousand lands;
 Girdling them with seas and mountains, rivers deep, and strands,
 To cast a look of pity upon Kathaleen Ny-Houlahan!
 He, who over sands and waves led Israël along—
 He, who fed, with heavenly bread, that chosen tribe and throng—
 He, who stood by Moses, when his foes were fierce and strong—
 May He show forth His might in saving Kathaleen Ny-Houlahan!
 M.

CAUSE AND EFFECT,

OR THE MISFORTUNES OF CHARLEY MALONE.

"WELL," said Hubert Dillon to me one day, "did you ever hear or read of such an unlucky being as that Charley Malone?"

"Indeed I did," was my reply; "on the contrary, I look upon him as one of the most fortunate men in existence."

"Tut, tut! how can you say that, unless it be for the pure love of contradiction?—how long is it ago, I ask you, since he almost broke his neck riding the steeple-chase in Mullagh-moran?"

"Why, my dear fellow," I rejoined, "I consider him most miraculously fortunate in not having broken his neck altogether on the occasion; he was warned before hand that the horse couldn't possibly carry him over such a leap; and how he escaped so safely, will always remain a puzzle to me."

"Well, I'll give you another instance—the very morning he was to have fought Cornet Bagley, didn't the police catch him, and get him bound over?"

"And devilish well for him they did, let me tell you, otherwise poor Charley would have been a case for the coroner before dinner time. The cornet's a dead shot, and you know yourself that Charley couldn't hit a turf clump."

"Didn't he lose fifty pounds at hazard to George Byrne last winter in one night?"

"Sign's on it, he booked himself against the bones for ever and a day as soon as he got up next morning, and by consequence may be expected to have something to leave to the heirs of his body, when he has them."

"Well, talking of heirs: what have you to say to his matrimonial speculations, this last affair particularly—to lose such a girl and such a fortune by his own confounded blundering. You'll not call that good fortune surely." But our reminiscences of "Charley's last," thus recalled, were too much for mortal gravity to bear, and laughter, long, loud, and uproarious, cut short the argument, leaving me still however impressed with the belief, that, only for himself, Charley would be a second Fortunatus; at all events, that he could not justly announce himself a martyr to the frowns of the goddess.

In the first place, two uncles, five cousins, and an elder brother of his own, had all stood between him and the family property, worth three hundred a-year, or thereabouts, but with an alacrity and good nature quite exemplary to all uncles and cousins under similar circumstances, they all within a couple of years quitted the scene. Before the last of them was sodded, however, Charley took it into his head to borrow some money, on the chance of his inheritance, at twenty per cent. As the aforesaid chance was rather a good one, he was soon accommodated; but the wax on the bond was scarce cold when he was called to the joy of mourning at the funeral of his last impediment. Oh, if he had had but the luck to wait one week!—he was the most unfortunate dog in the world!

Still, matrimony might enable him to retrieve all, and accordingly to work he went, and wild work, sure enough, he made of it. His last affair in that line, however, being that which fairly convinced him of the unprofitable nature of his pursuit, and likewise being rather a good thing in its way, is the only one which I shall offer in illustration of Charley's luck and Charley's mode of managing it.

A letter, directed in female fashion, was handed to him one morning by the postmaster of B——, the town contiguous to which lay his mansion; thus ran its contents, with the commentary of the reader:—

"Dear Charles—[has she the tin, I wonder?] a severe attack of rheumatism [pooh! it's from my aunt Bindon—hum—ay—Marsh's prescriptions—Mr Gregg's new chapel—have

to sacrifice all and quit Dublin—hallo! what's this?] Your cousin Lucy [they say she has three thousand] has suffered so much from the bad air of the city, that I must endeavour to procure her the benefit of a country residence. I would prefer the town of B——, if there be a good house to let in it. Pray let me know as soon as you can, and the rent, and every thing about it, &c. &c.—Your attached aunt,

LUCY BINDON."

Who shall say now that Charley wasn't a lucky dog, with a handsome heiress almost thrown into his arms by a dowager-guardian, with whom he stood as dear Charles? What numberless opportunities would he not enjoy! Sole protector of two lone women; the one laid up by rheumatism, and fully occupied by devotion and card-playing; the other dying for the want of country air and exercise, and in all probability not at all averse to the idea of sharing her delights with a companion. They would be absolutely his own fee-simple property. Such good fortune was not an every-day affair, and deserved more than every-day exertion to second and secure it. So Charley set about his aunt's commission in earnest, and before nightfall succeeded in ferreting a half-pay lieutenant and his family out of the best house in the town, to make room for the dowager and her daughter; wrote in reply an account of his doings, with such a list of the amenities of the locality as would have added fifty per cent, at least, to its value if it were to be sold by auction; and inclosed at the same time a well-authenticated statement of a most extraordinary cure of rheumatism which had been effected by the waters of a blessed well in the neighbourhood.

In due course of time the ladies were domiciled in their new dwelling, with Charley, of course, for their factotum and natural protector. The blessed well began to work a miracle on the aunt, and the country air would have done as much for Lucy if she required it; but deuce a bit of it she wanted; her cheeks were as red and her step as firm as if she had been born and bred within the precincts of the parish; and whatever was the cause of her rustication, Charley could swear it was not bodily weakness. Ill-natured people said she had been a thought too sweet to an attorney's apprentice in the city, and that therein lay the secret of her mother's forsaking the delights of Marsh's prescriptions and Gregg's new chapel—that prudent personage not approving of the connection. If that be the case, a tough heart had Lucy Bindon, and never may it be my lot to make such a faint impression on woman-kind as was made by that luckless apprentice; for a merrier laugh never rang in the precincts of B——, and a brighter pair of eyes never glittered in its dull, quiet street. But, oh! that laugh and those eyes, they played the devil entirely with the heart of her cousin Charley.

And he was a happy man, as why the deuce should'n't he? philandering, morning, noon, and night, with his merry cousin in the fields and in the woods, and at the fireside and by the piano, not to talk of all the dangerous little reunions on the stairs or in the lobby, until at last the dowager began to smell a rat, and hint her scruples about the propriety of cousin-work. In vain did Lucy disclaim all matrimonial intents, and assure her that it was all innocence, mere flirting, a bit of fun and no more, upon her word and honour. Still the poor woman would not be comforted; she knew, she said, several cases of cousins getting married, and somehow or other something or other happened to point out the impropriety in each case. In one, both parties died before they were twenty years married—indeed, they were a little oldish and sickly; in another, the gentleman got into debt and ruined himself; in another, the lady took to drinking; and in another, sundry and several small infants exchanged their cradles for coffins; all which terrible examples, however, and their strange and unusual phenomena, had no effect at all on Charley, for he was determined to win his point in spite of all the dowagers that ever took snuff, or all the enumerated horrors of their experience.

After all, though, there were not so many obstacles to encounter in that quarter as at first appeared, there being one great recommendation in his favour, inasmuch as he was neither counsellor nor attorney, in embryo or in esse; from the members of both which learned and respectable professions the defunct Mr Bindon had received in his day so many un-neighbourly offices, that his relict conceived it a sacred duty to the dead to hate the aforesaid with all the hatred of which a stiff-necked Irish dowager was capable; and, then, he was her own flesh and blood, and who had such a good right to Lucy and her three thousand? or who would be so much